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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/670,606	09/26/2000	Don C. Williams	WillD01/870	4650

7590 12/02/2002

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EXAMINER

BARFIELD, ANTHONY DERRELL

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3636

DATE MAILED: 12/02/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/670,606

Applicant(s)

WILLIAMS, DON C.

Examiner

Anthony D Barfield

Art Unit

3636

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 September 2002.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-29 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 11-27 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-5,7-9,28 and 29 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 4 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). 6.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

The Declaration of Counsel filed on 9/3/02 under 37 CFR 1.131 has been considered but is ineffective to overcome the Stokesbary, USP 6,219,865 reference.

The evidence submitted is insufficient to establish a conception of the invention prior to the effective date of the Stokesbary reference. While conception is the mental part of the inventive act, it must be capable of proof, such as by demonstrative evidence or by a **complete disclosure to another**. Conception is more than a vague idea of how to solve a problem. The requisite means themselves and their interaction must also be comprehended. See *Mergenthaler v. Scudder*, 1897 C.D. 724, 81 O.G. 1417 (D.C. Cir. 1897). The declaration makes mention of Polaroid photographs as evidence but fails to provide proof of these photographs. Furthermore the written disclosure provided as evidence does not overcome the rejection of the claimed invention as recited in the claims. The written disclosure limits applicant only to the invention of a portable device, which is "*firm durable foam (oblong shaped) that is positioned between the chain and chest*". The written disclosure submitted **does not support a "Y" shaped block or the method of placing "a block of material having a soft top with a curved angled depression forming a cup for the chin adjacent to but spaced from the neck"**

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject

matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-2,5,7-9, 28 and 29 as best understood are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stokesbary. Stokesbary shows the use of a symmetrical block of soft material (18) having a curved angled depression (20) forming a cup for a users chin. Stokesbary further discloses the use of a looping elongated flexible member (14). The method steps as recited would obviously and inherently be incorporated within the use of the block, as taught by Stokesbary.

Claims 1-3,5, 7-9 and 28 as best understood are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over White. White shows the use of a block of soft material (10) having a curved angled depression (14) forming a cup for a users chin. White further discloses the use of a looping elongated flexible member (22). The method steps as recited would obviously and inherently be incorporated within the use of the block, as taught by White

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 9/3/02 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. In regards to applicant's arguments drawn to the Stokesbary reference, applicant is referred to the above response to the "Swearing Back" declaration.

In response to applicant's argument that the "*White device is one "for use in playing golf" ...standing and actively moving*" in contrast to the use of applicant's invention by a user "sitting and relaxing" while "traveling", a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention **must result in a structural difference** between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. **If the prior art**

structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. In a claim drawn to a process of making, the intended use must result in a manipulative difference as compared to the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963).

In response to applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning, it must be recognized that any judgment on obviousness is in a sense necessarily a reconstruction based upon hindsight reasoning. But so long as it takes into account only knowledge which was within **the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made**, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper. See *In re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 4 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 11-27 are allowed over the prior art made of record.

Conclusion

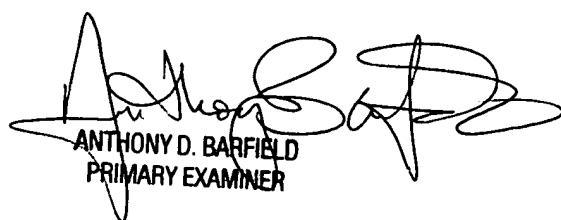
THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anthony D. Barfield whose telephone number is (703) 308-2158.

adb

11/29/02



ANTHONY D. BARFIELD
PRIMARY EXAMINER